

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/594,389

Examiner

Binh-An D. Nguyen

Applicant(s)

NAGATA ET AL.

Art Unit

3713

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to the amendment filed January 21, 2004.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1, 4-9, 11-16, 18, 19 and 21-33.
3. ☒ The drawings filed on 12 March 2002 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.


Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☐ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____


Teresa Walberg
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Group 3700

DETAILED ACTION

1. The Amendment filed January 21, 2004 has overcome the rejection set forth in the Office action sent October 21, 2003.

The limitations of an input apparatus for game systems comprising an operation member adapted to receive a load; a plurality of detection units arranged such that said operation member is supported by said detection units at a plurality of points around an outer circumference of said operation member with a space being formed under a center of said operation member, each of said detection units being capable of outputting a predetermined detection signal in response to changes in load in a predetermined direction in relation to said operation member, said sensing element including one pair of elongate electrode plates arranged to contact or separate from each other according to the load; said coating member including a protrusion for limiting a position to which the load toward said sensing element is transmitted, said protrusion being shifted from both longitudinal ends of said electrode plates into a central side of said electrode plates and supporting said operation member, in combination with other presented limitations, are neither disclosed nor taught by the art of record.

Further, the limitations of a foot switch for an input apparatus for game systems comprising a frame defining a support surface; at least one detection unit arranged on said support surface of said frame and to output a detection signal in response to changes in a load applied in a predetermined direction, each of said at least one detection unit comprising a sensing element and a coating member made of elastic and

Art Unit: 3713

surrounding said sensing element, said sensing element including a pair of elongate electrode plates arranged to contact or separate from each other according to the load, and said coating member including a protrusion for limiting a position to which the load toward said sensing element is transmitted; said protrusion being spaced from both longitudinal ends of said electrode plates, in combination with other presented limitations, are neither disclosed nor taught by the art of record.


Claims 1, 4-9, 11-16, 18, 19, and 21-33, therefore, are allowable.

2. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Binh-An D. Nguyen whose telephone number is 703-305-5713. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Teresa Walberg can be reached on 703-308-1327. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

BN


Teresa Walberg
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Group 3700